



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Albert Balagso

SUBJECT: SELF CLEANING RESTROOMS

DATE: May 22, 2008

Approved

Date

5-23-08

BACKGROUND

At the Neighborhood Services CSA Budget Study Session on May 9, 2008, Councilmember Liccardo inquired about the cost per unit for self cleaning restrooms in parks. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the requested information.

ANALYSIS

PRNS is continually examining innovative ways to reduce maintenance and operations costs. One type of operational change that PRNS has examined is the use of self-cleaning restrooms within neighborhood and community parks, similar to those that currently exist in certain parks in the downtown core area. There is a lot of debate in cities across the country regarding the pros and cons of this type of restroom. Issues that have been identified include (1) these toilets are not free to the public; (2) rather than paying for the use of the restrooms, the user may go to the bathroom in the outlying areas; (3) most are single toilet units and so if a user occupies the restroom for 10 to 20 minutes, the restroom would be unavailable to other users for that period of time; (4) restrooms typically require a service contract; and (5) currently, there are no units for sale that are manufactured in the United States so replacement parts would be difficult to obtain in a timely manner.

Since there are no units for sale manufactured in the United States, the only option available is to lease the restroom. Quotes received from the vendor indicate that it would cost approximately \$67,000 per year to lease, maintain and operate a single unit restroom. By comparison, a typical restroom operated by the City would cost approximately \$15,000 to \$25,000 per year to operate and maintain. The cost to construct a two stall restroom is approximately \$600,000 and over the 30 to 50 year life cycle, it would be cheaper to build, operate and maintain a traditional stand alone restroom.

In summary, while the current cost of leasing or purchasing a self cleaning restroom does not lend itself to pursuing these types of facilities at this time, staff will continue to research this technology. For example, staff has been in contact with a company that has indicated plans to manufacture for sale units in the United States within the next 2 years and this could bring costs down significantly.

Albert Balagso
Director of Parks, Recreation and
Neighborhood Services